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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/583,459	06/19/2006	Arthur H. Thompson	2004UR004	3699
7590	01/09/2008	EXAMINER HUGHES, DEANDRA M		
J Paul Plummer ExxonMobil Upstream Research Company P O Box 2189 (Corp-Urc-Sw337) Houston, TX 77252-2189		ART UNIT 3663	PAPER NUMBER	
		MAIL DATE 01/09/2008	DELIVERY MODE PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/583,459	THOMPSON ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Deandra M. Hughes	3663

— The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address —
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 October 2007.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 2-7, 10-17 and 19-26 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 2-7, 10-17, 19-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. The amendment filed 10/19/07 has been entered.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 8-10, and 18 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1, 8-9, and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Thompson (US 5,041,792 published Aug. 20, 1991).

With regard to claim 1, a method for reducing noise from near-surface conversions (e.g., note col. 6, lines 45-65) of EM energy to seismic energy in an electroseismic survey of a subsurface formation (fig. 1), said survey using a plurality of near-surface electrodes (#10, #12; col. 4, lines 10-15) connected to the output terminals of a source signal generator (#18) for transmission of electrical current into the earth (#14), said method comprising:

- positioning one item of conducting material (#10) or a plurality of such items electrically connected to each other to substantially minimize near-surface electric fields (minimize spreading distance; col. 4, lines 60-68; col. 5, lines 1-

30; note in particular col. 5, line 33) in a region between or defined by the item or items of conducting material (col. 5, line 10), wherein in the case of a single item of conducting material the item is configured to define a region, thereby providing an area of low surface noise for survey receiver placement (col. 5, lines 25-30).

With regard to claims 8 and 18, the two electrodes (#10 and #12) are positioned above the formation (#14), positioning at least one far electrode (e.g. #10', #10'', #12', #12'') separated by the other electrodes a sufficient distance to cause current to penetrate the earth formation (col. 3, line 65), placing a receiver near the electrodes (#19), applying an electrical signal between the near electrodes and the far electrodes (V1, V2, or V3) and measuring the seismic response near the electrodes (col. 4, lines 33-34).

With regard to claim 9, electrodes #10 and #12 are substantially horizontal (fig. 2).

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.
6. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not

mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Deandra M. Hughes whose telephone number is 571-272-6982. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 8:30am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jack Keith can be reached on 571-272-6878. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Deandra M. Hughes
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3663